

Cover Letter to the Local Boundary Commission

Responsive Brief regarding the formation of a Petersburg Borough

I've been doing some thinking about my motivation for being against borough formation. I started off by examining my thoughts and then tried to bring into focus what my neighbors have been saying about their reasons.

I am now a senior citizen. I started off my recent thinking by asking myself, "Am I opposed to the Borough because I am old and set in my ways and just plain suspicious of change?" The answer is "No." While not a fan of change for change's sake, I do not oppose the borough out of a mindless desire to maintain the status quo. Specifically, I do not want to be part of a group whose political and financial stances and practices are an anathema to me. I especially do not want to be forced into a situation where my money will be taken from me and mine to be used to support 'good ole boy' politics and 'tax and spend' economics.

There is also an odious undercurrent of subterfuge and misdirection running through this process. This is evident in official statements that there will be no enforcement of planning, zoning, permitting, or building codes while the current head of Petersburg Planning and Zoning tells two of my neighbors that she can hardly wait to get us into the borough and straighten us out by enforcing building codes. It is evident when one of my neighbors who has been vociferously leading the charge for borough formation can look me in the eye and tell me he has not made up his mind which way he will vote on the issue. It is evident in the reasons given in the petition itself with half-truths, scare tactics, and circular reasoning.

Now comes consideration of what the majority of my neighbors have been telling me. They asked me to summarize their feelings in a letter to the Local Boundary Commission. I did so for my Keene Channel neighbors and submitted that letter to Mr. Brent Williams on September 18, 2011. It was signed by 13 of the 18 persons who consider themselves permanent residents of this neighborhood (One neighbor was out moose hunting and I am convinced she would have signed had I been able to reach her). The signers adamantly oppose formation of the Petersburg Borough for reasons stated in that letter. Their reasons echo and reinforce mine.

There are 18 of us who live more or less full time along Keene Channel. If you continue on around into the Duncan Canal, there are an additional 6 persons who identify themselves as permanent residents. All 24 of us are registered to vote. 20 of the 24 oppose the formation of the Petersburg Borough. In the America I know and love, this percentage of the population should effortlessly prevail in political decisions but your regulations are on the verge of pitting us against 3,000 who will be inclined to see us as their financial salvation.

I implore you to make all of your findings lean towards rejection of the petition to form a Petersburg Borough whenever and wherever it is legally possible to do so. Thank you for your consideration.

George B. Cole
Keene Channel, Alaska